

basilica of St. John of Lateran, at Rome. Around the altar, and in the wings of the sanctuary, were seats for the assistant clergy, with an elevated chair for the bishop at the bottom of the aisle in the centre. In some of the large basilicae the sanctuary was divided from the nave by the "Triumphal Arch,"—an imitation of the triumphal arches of ancient Rome,—but, in its new situation, intended to proclaim the triumph of the cross.

Of the existing Christian basilicae at Rome, the remarkable church of San' Clemente is the first which the architectural pilgrim should visit.

The church of St. Agnese is one of those which were built immediately above a martyr's grave,—above a part of the catacombs in which the body of St. Agnese was found. It is built on the usual plan of the basilicae.

The church of St. Prassede is also on the usual plan of the basilicae, with the addition, however, of a series of immense round arches, which are thrown over the nave at wide intervals. Pope Paschal I. added to this church a small chapel, which opens out of one side of the church, and which is ornamented with mosaics. The mosaic which adorns the ceiling represents a picture of our Saviour; supported by four angels. There is great beauty and no inconsiderable degree of classical feeling in this composition. This chapel is one of the earliest instances of a side chapel, which formed no part of the primitive churches.

The campanile, or bell tower, is a marked departure from the primitive age. It was almost invariably erected in front of the church at Rome, but it never thoroughly became an assimilated integral portion of the basilica.

The rule of Orientation, though prescribed by the apostolical constitutions, never obtained in Italy, where the churches are turned indiscriminately towards every quarter of the heavens. It is not quite clear when this rule was adopted, which afterwards became general. St. Augustine says, "Let us turn to the rising sun of truth."

I have mentioned that, in the gallery of the civil basilicae, the women were placed on one side and the men on the other. Such appears to have been the arrangement carried out in the early Christian churches. There are, doubtless, many here who have been struck at first sight, that while the south side of the choir of the magnificent cathedral at Cologne seems to blossom with exuberance, the north side—as with those at Freiburg and Amiens—is comparatively plain. The fact, perhaps, may be thus explained. The north side has had, since the first period of Christianity, its particular meaning; the south the same. The north side was that of the evangelists, who gave the truth in plainness and simplicity; the south was that of the prophets, who represented it in oriental figure and imagery. Also the women, who were especially commanded to cover themselves, and abstain from ornament, stood on the north side, hence called the *mathebris*; while the men, to whom no such prohibition extended, stood on the south. Hence it is that the south side is occasionally found to be richly decorated—that towards the north markedly simplified.

More than 1,500 years have elapsed (says his Excellency the Chevalier Bunsen, in his admirable work which he has devoted to the basilicae), since the basilicae of Rome, in their various changes, have been the admiration of the Christian world; and he considers that the unity of idea which prevails in its form gives these buildings an indescribable charm.

There is still one Christian Basilica, which, although not situated at Rome, cannot be passed over without some allusion. I refer to the Basilica of St. Boniface, at Munich, which has peculiar claims upon our attention. This most beautiful church was commenced in the year 1836, and resembles the church of St. Paul (*fuori delle mura*), at Rome, which was the most complete of the Roman Basilicae, but was unfortunately destroyed by fire in the year 1822. The Basilica of St. Boniface is supported in the interior by sixty-four columns of marble, dividing the aisles from the nave. The pavement is of marble, the roof of wood painted blue; with gold-stars, the beams being carved and gilt; the sides of the church are ornamented with paintings in fresco, by Hess, one of the most distinguished of the German

artists. The subjects of these frescoes are the principal events in the life of St. Boniface. One of the earliest of them is of surpassing beauty. St. Boniface—then Winfred the Monk—is bidding farewell to those who had been his companions in the Benedictine Abbey of Nutsall, near Winchester, as he embarks on his holy mission. Among those uninspired men who have been distinguished by active piety, we have few greater to revere than the Monk of Nutsall; nor can we find a greater benefactor of the human race.

We have also in the Basilica of St. Boniface is adorned with paintings in fresco, the subjects of which being prominently before the eyes of the worshippers the zeal with which that great man was inspired, in promoting the cause of that holy religion which they profess, and for which he ultimately laid down his life. And here perhaps it may not be irrelevant to say a few words on the destruction of ancient works of art. During the latter part of the reign of Constantine, many statues of the gods were destroyed and melted down, and not long after his time a systematic destruction began, which under Theodosius spread over all parts of the empire. This spirit of destruction, however, was not directed against works of art in general, and as such, but only against the Pagan idols. The opinion therefore, which is entertained by some, that the losses we have sustained in works of ancient art are mainly attributable to the introduction of Christianity, is too sweeping and general. Of the same character is another opinion, according to which the final decay of ancient art was a consequence of the spiritual life of the new religion. The coincidence of the general introduction of Christianity with the decay of the arts is merely accidental. That the early Christians did not despise the arts as such, is clear from several facts. We know that they erected statues to their martyrs, in which we have a specimen in that of St. Hippolytus, in the Vatican library; and it is expressly stated by Baronius that Christians devoted themselves to the exercise of the arts. The numerous works, lastly, which have been found in the Christian sanctuaries at Rome, might alone be a sufficient proof that the early Christians were not hostile to the representation of the heroes of their religion in works of art. It has been reserved for the fanatic fury of the Iconoclasts in a great measure to destroy the traces of the former splendour of the imitative arts. It must, likewise, ever be admitted that statuary and painting are a kind of silent poetry, which arouses the attention, interests the heart, strikes the eye, and elevates the imagination. The almost total exclusion, therefore, of picturesque representations from the reformed churches, is greatly to be regretted. Whether mankind in any state of society were ever so ignorant as to make these visible representations the actual objects of their adoration may well be doubted, but, at all events, there can now be no danger of such an error in the most uninformed part of Europe; and it may yet be hoped that as the spirit of bigotry declines, religion may be allowed to avail herself of every aid which may engage her admirers, illustrate her precepts, or enforce her laws.

THE LIVERPOOL GOODS STATION OF THE NORTH-WESTERN RAILWAY in Waterloo-road contains 5 acres of land, entirely occupied by warehouses and zinc covered shelving. To form the whole upwards of 120 separate properties, including 150 dwelling-houses, and various warehouses, sheds, &c., were purchased and pulled down. The shelving covers seven lines of rail, and extends over a span of 183 feet, including a cotton-quay, whence 20,000 bales of cotton can be loaded daily. The warehouses are far larger than any other even in Liverpool. The rooms are each 102 feet by 90, containing an area close upon 1,000 square yards. The principal entrances to this station, which is said to be the largest goods station in England, are from Waterloo-road and Great Howard-street. It is reached from Edge-hill by the new Victoria tunnel. An engine of 50 horse-power is to do all the warehouse work. The whole premises have been whitewashed. The general offices of the Company are to be built on an adjoining plot of land.

BIRMINGHAM WORKHOUSE COMPETITION.

We have received the following from one of the selecting architects:—

You have given circulation to the assumption of Mr. Brookes, that the inspecting architects were in error, in recommending the designs Nos. 21 and 24, to the guardians, on the ground of the discovery which he had made, of the imperfect erasure on the former giving a clue to the authorship of the designs, and therefore disqualifying them according to the instructions given to competitors.

I think it right to forward the enclosed extract from the *Birmingham Journal* of last week, which appears to take a candid view of the circumstances upon which this opposition to the report was founded, but which proved so weak, as to end in a minority of four, on the amendment to the original motion being put from the chair at a full Board.

In correction, however, of that paragraph, I have to state that the inspecting architects were not cognizant of any other signature upon the plan No. 21, than the assumed motto "*Perseverando*," and that the design recommended for adoption were in strict accordance with the instructions. They cannot but feel satisfied that no stronger ground of opposition could be found to the opinion of the report, and that whatever uninformed writers may assume or insinuate, they are conscious of having discharged a very onerous duty to the best of their judgment, and in a fair and honourable manner.

It will probably be asking too much to request that you will give insertion to the journal extract, but I must beg the favour of your publishing this letter in your next paper, in order that the erroneous impression may be counteracted which your article is calculated to create in the minds of those who are interested in the competition.

HENRY J. STEVENS, Architect.

The following portion of the article in question is all that bears in the slightest degree on the point in dispute:—"It has been found that on the plan No. 21, which it was considered was the production of the same architect as No. 24—recommended as the best—the names of Messrs. Drury and Bateman appear partially erased. Under any other circumstances, this would have been a most unfortunate disclosure; even as it is, the *contretemps* is awkward. Now, without entering into the question whether the fact of this distinctive mark being upon these plans, is a breach of the rules of competition sufficient to justify disqualification, and while being perfectly sensible of the impropriety of names being affixed to them, we cannot imagine that the decision of the inspecting architects would be influenced either one way or the other by the knowledge so inopportunistically afforded."

Mr. Stevens has called a very bad witness. The respectable local paper quoted, not being a professional journal, will not enter "into the question whether the fact of this distinctive mark being upon these plans, is a breach of the rules of competition sufficient to justify disqualification;" but we do, and state unequivocally the affixing of the names not being denied that the plans were disqualified, and that, too, by a departure from the instructions in the graves' particular, whether or not it "influenced" the inspecting architects, either one way or the other, by the knowledge so inopportunistically afforded," has nothing whatever to do with the question—as we said last week.

Mr. Stevens had done better if he had rested solely on his assertion that they "were not cognizant of any other signature upon the plans than the assumed motto,"—although this might perhaps lead some of the guardians to imagine that the examination of the plans had not been very minute.

Striving as we do in all cases to induce committees to take professional assistance in the determination of competitions, we much deplore this occurrence, and fear that the reformation of architectural competitions will be little advanced by the judicial proceedings of Messrs. Stevens, Edge, and Gibson.

* The names of the authors: something more than a clue.—Ed.